

Statistical bulletin

# Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 14 November 2024

Early data on the UK economy and society. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and innovative methods. These are official statistics in development.

Contact:  
Real Time Indicators team  
realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk

Release date:  
14 November 2024

Next release:  
21 November 2024

## Table of contents

1. [Main points](#)
2. [Latest indicators at a glance](#)
3. [Consumer behaviour](#)
4. [Business and workforce](#)
5. [Energy](#)
6. [Transport](#)
7. [Housing](#)
8. [Data](#)
9. [Glossary](#)
10. [Data sources and quality](#)
11. [Related links](#)
12. [Cite this statistical bulletin](#)

# 1 . Main points

- Overall retail footfall decreased by 8% in the week to 10 November 2024 when compared with the previous week, and was 1% lower when compared with the equivalent week of 2023 (MRI OnLocation). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The seasonally adjusted Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% in October 2024 compared with the previous month, and was 3% higher than in October 2023 (Vocalink and Pay.UK). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- UK credit and debit card payments increased by 1% in October 2024 compared with September 2024 but decreased by 7% when compared with October 2023 (Bank of England). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- Only 15% of businesses reported that turnover increased during October 2024 when compared with the previous month, while 54% reported it staying the same, 22% reported it decreasing and 9% were not sure (initial results from Wave 120 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey). [Section 4: Business and Workforce](#).
- For businesses trading, some of the main challenges impacting turnover during early November 2024 were economic uncertainty (23%), competition (18%), cost of labour (16%), cost of materials (16%) and insufficient domestic demand (13%) (initial results from Wave 120 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey). [Section 4: Business and Workforce](#).
- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 2% to 3.537 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) in the week to 10 November 2024 when compared with the previous week but remained broadly unchanged when compared with the equivalent week of 2023; the System Price of electricity increased by 10% to 9.424 p/kWh when compared with the previous week, and also increased by 10% when compared with the equivalent week of 2023 (National Gas Transmission, Elexon). [Section 5: Energy](#).
- The number of ship visits to major UK ports decreased by 1% in the week to 10 November 2024 when compared to the previous week and decreased by 3% when compared with the equivalent week of 2023; the number of UK flights decreased by 11% in the most recent week, as expected at this time of year but increased by 3% when compared with the equivalent week of 2023 (exactEarth, EUROCONTROL). [Section 6: Transport](#).
- The total number of Energy Building Performance Certificates (EPCs) for new dwellings across England and Wales in the week to 10 November 2024 was 13% lower when compared with the equivalent period of 2023 (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government). [Section 7: Housing](#).

These are official statistics in development, and we advise caution when using the data. The data sources used to compile these indicators are regularly reviewed to ensure they are representative and relevant, which may mean indicators change at short notice. Read more in [Section 9: Data sources and quality](#).

## 2 . Latest indicators at a glance

### Notes:

1. Card spending over time is pushed upwards by the impacts of both inflation on value of transactions and cash-to-card conversion.
2. Revolut adjustments to user count are at an aggregate level and as such age bands may not adjust evenly.
3. Indicators with SA in the title have been seasonally adjusted.

## 3 . Consumer behaviour

## Monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount and failure rate

The monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount are anonymised and aggregated datasets made available to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) by Pay.UK and Vocalink. The data are unadjusted for inflation and reflect economic activity in nominal terms.

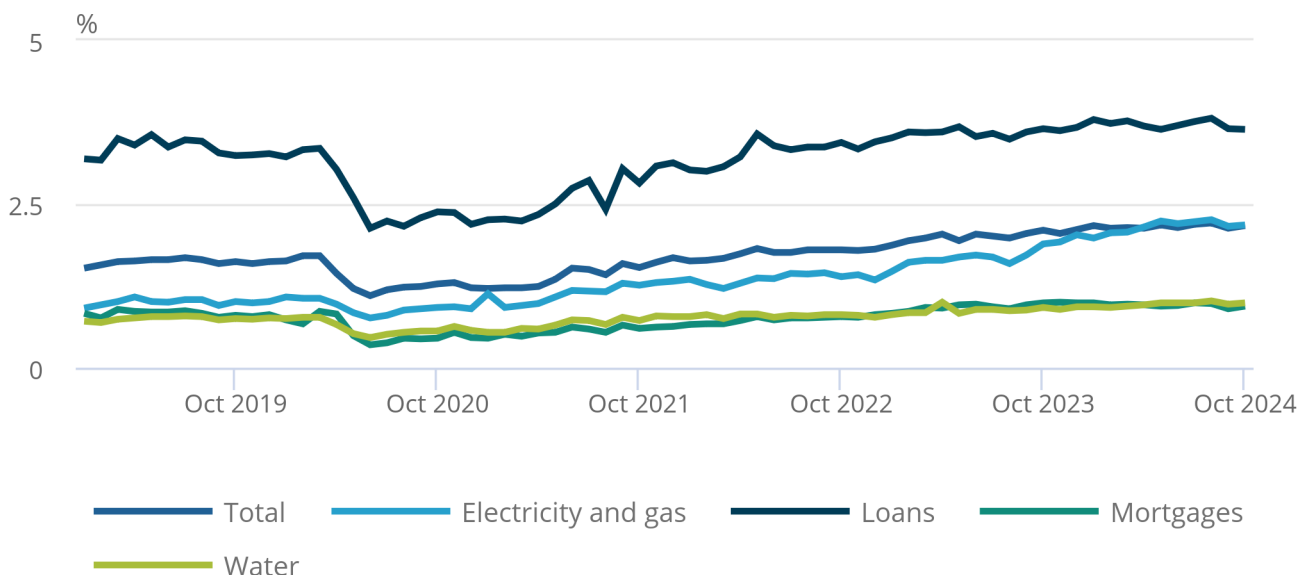
For further details on what is covered within this indicator, see our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#).

**Figure 1: The total Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% in October 2024, compared with September 2024, and increased by 3% when compared with October 2023**

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2019 to October 2024, seasonally adjusted

Figure 1: The total Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% in October 2024, compared with September 2024, and increased by 3% when compared with October 2023

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2019 to October 2024, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. The total series covers all Direct Debit failure, comprising data beyond the five categories published in our [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#).
3. The underlying failure rates are low, so month-to-month volatility is expected within this series.

In October 2024, the seasonally adjusted "Total" Direct Debit failure rate increased by 2% when compared with September 2024. This rise was a result of increases in failure rates for "Electricity and Gas" by 1%, "Mortgages" by 5%, and "Water" by 2%.

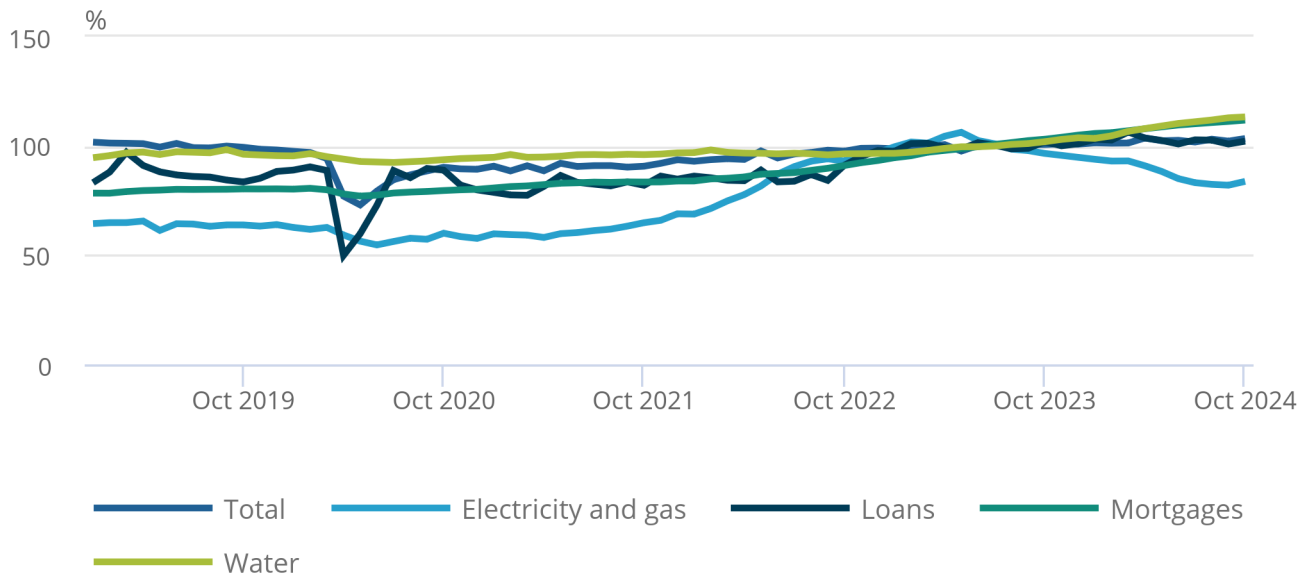
When compared with October 2023, the seasonally adjusted "Total" Direct Debit failure rate rose by 3%. Year-on-year, the failure rate for "Electricity and Gas" and "Water" increased by 15% and 7%, respectively. Meanwhile "Mortgages" saw a 5% decrease in failure rates and "Loans" remained broadly unchanged.

**Figure 2: The total monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount increased by 3% in October 2024 when compared with October 2023**

Average transaction amount, UK, January 2019 to October 2024, seasonally adjusted

Figure 2: The total monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount increased by 3% in October 2024 when compared with October 2023

Average transaction amount, UK, January 2019 to October 2024, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. The total series covers all Direct Debit transactions, comprising data beyond the five categories published in our [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#).
3. Data are not adjusted for inflation.

The total average Direct Debit transaction amount increased by 1% in October 2024, after seasonal adjustment, when compared with September 2024. This rise was a result of increases in transaction amounts for "Electricity and Gas", "Mortgages", and "Loans" (which rose by 2%, 1%, and 1% respectively), while "Water" remained broadly unchanged.

When compared with October 2023, the seasonally adjusted "Total" Direct Debit transaction amount increased by 3%. Year-on-year, the transaction amount for "Water" and "Mortgages" saw increases of 11% and 8%, respectively, while "Electricity and Gas" saw a decline of 13% and "Loans" remained broadly unchanged.

Our accompanying [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#) is available.

## **UK credit and debit card payments: weekly and monthly, non-seasonally adjusted**

This week's bulletin introduces a new Bank of England indicator for UK credit and debit card payments.

This new indicator is presented as an index, with weekly percentage changes calculated for a sample of relevant merchants. Percentage changes are indexed to the average for the period from week ending 30 June 2023 to week ending 29 December 2023. It replaces our [UK spending on credit and debit cards dataset](#) which was last updated on 16 May 2024.

The data for our new indicator on UK credit and debit card payments is aggregated and derived from a much larger sample than that we previously used to estimate UK credit and debit card spending. More specifically, the number of merchant acquirers has increased from 6 to 11 and the number of businesses included has increased from approximately 100 to approximately 1,300. As such, the two data series are not directly comparable.

Relevant merchants included in this sample were those identified by the Bank of England. The Bank of England identified merchants as eligible if they had an account with one (or multiple) of the main merchant acquirers and met certain payment frequency conditions.

Not all merchants were included in this sample. As far as possible, the data excludes:

- non-Great Britain (GB) transfers
- personal transactions
- transfers between merchant acquirer accounts

The data presented in this indicator represent a percentage change of the weekly sum of credit and debit card payments relative to an index of 100. For example, a value of 110 means that the total payments for that week are 10 per cent higher than the average weekly payments from week ending 30 June 2023 to week ending 29 December 2023. While a value of 95 means that the total payments for that week are 5 per cent lower. The merchant composition may change over time, and a 10 per cent increase may not necessarily represent an increase in sales for the same group of merchants.

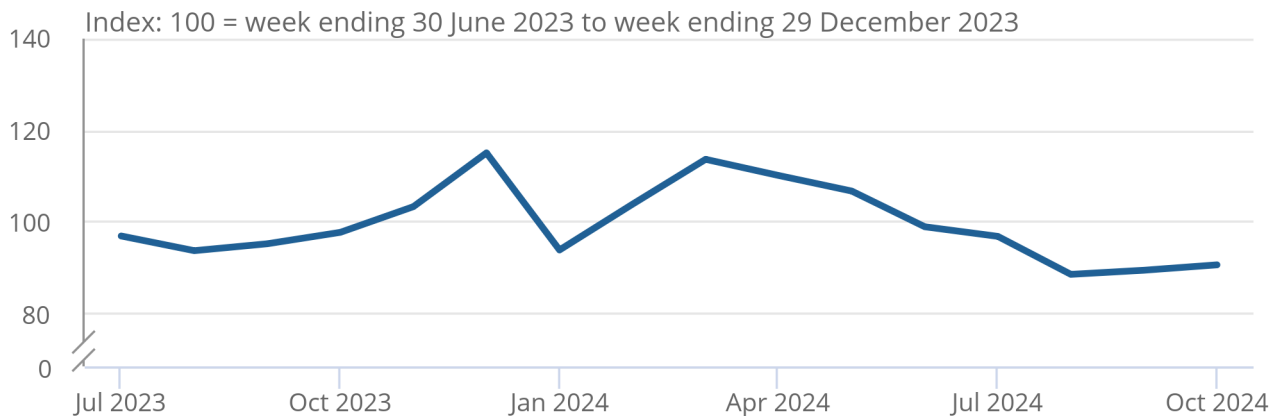
Further information on payment and settlement systems is available on the [Bank of England website](#).

**Figure 3: UK credit and debit card payments increased by 1% in October 2024 when compared with the previous month**

Index of credit and debit card payments, UK, July 2023 to October 2024

Figure 3: UK credit and debit card payments increased by 1% in October 2024 when compared with the previous month

Index of credit and debit card payments, UK, July 2023 to October 2024



Source: Calculations from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Bank of England (BoE)

Notes:

1. The monthly payment index is generated by taking the unweighted mean of the weekly payments-based aggregate index in each month. It is calculated by the ONS, rather than being an additional series that is produced and validated by BoE.
2. Percentage difference is derived from the current and previous index value before rounding.
3. Data have been adjusted for outliers and bank holidays by BoE.
4. The estimates presented in this bulletin include business-to-business transactions and consumer-to-business transactions. This means that large, time-sensitive payments (for example, house purchases or large corporate transactions) are included in the data.

Aggregate UK credit and debit card payments increased by 1% in October 2024 compared with September 2024 but decreased by 7% when compared with October 2023.

Weekly and monthly UK credit and debit card payment indices are available in our accompanying UK credit and debit payments dataset.

Our discontinued weekly and monthly seasonally adjusted CHAPS indices, and the daily and monthly non-seasonally adjusted CHAPS indices up until May 2024, are available in our accompanying [UK spending on credit and debit cards dataset](#).



## National retail footfall

High street, shopping centre, and retail park footfall all decreased in the week to 10 November 2024 when compared with the previous week (by 10%, 10% and 3%, respectively). This coincides with the end of half term. When compared with the equivalent week of 2023, high street footfall remained broadly unchanged, while shopping centre and retail park footfall fell by 4% and 1%, respectively.

**Figure 4: Overall retail footfall decreased by 8% in the week to 10 November 2024 when compared with the previous week and was 1% lower than the equivalent week of 2023**

Index of daily retail footfall volumes, UK, 1 January 2023 to 10 November 2024, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 4: Overall retail footfall decreased by 8% in the week to 10 November 2024 when compared with the previous week and was 1% lower than the equivalent week of 2023

Index of daily retail footfall volumes, UK, 1 January 2023 to 10 November 2024, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: MRI OnLocation

Notes:

1. Peaks in footfall correspond to bank holidays and school holidays and for the previous 12 months are as follows: Week 51, 2023 Christmas bank holidays and school holidays; Week 7, 2024 February school half term; Week 15, 2024 Easter bank holidays and school holidays; Week 21, 2024 late May bank holiday and school half term; Weeks 30 to 35, 2024 school holidays; Week 43, 2024 October half-term.

When compared with the previous week, overall retail footfall decreased in 10 of the 12 UK countries and English regions and increased in the remaining 2. The largest week-on-week decreases were in Wales and the South West of England, where overall retail footfall decreased by 15% and 10%, respectively. Increases were seen in the North West of England and Northern Ireland, which rose by 7% and 1%, respectively.

When compared with the equivalent week of 2023, overall retail footfall decreased in 11 of the 12 UK countries and English regions and remained broadly unchanged in the remaining 1. The largest year-on-year decreases were in Northern Ireland and the North West of England, which fell by 16% and 8%, respectively. Only the East of England remained broadly unchanged.

## Automotive fuel spending

The annual growth rate in average fuel price increased by one percentage point in the week to 3 November 2024, compared with the previous week, but was three percentage points lower than the equivalent week of 2023.

The annual growth rate in the estimated fuel demand per transaction decreased by one percentage point in the week to 3 November 2024, compared with the previous week, but was broadly unchanged against the equivalent week of 2023.

Our accompanying [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#) is available.

## 4 . Business and workforce

### Business impact and insights

The Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) collects data from selected industries and does not have full coverage of the UK economy. For more information on the industries covered in the BICS sample, see our [BICS QMI](#).

Initial findings from Wave 120 of BICS shows that only 15% of businesses reported that turnover had increased during October 2024 when compared to the previous month. In contrast, 54% of businesses reported that turnover had stayed the same, 22% reported that turnover had decreased and 9% were not sure. The percentage of businesses reporting that their turnover stayed the same or decreased during October 2024 was broadly similar to the percentages reported for September 2024.

For businesses trading, some of the main challenges impacting business turnover during early November 2024 were economic uncertainty (23%), competition (18%), cost of labour (16%), cost of materials (16%) and insufficient domestic demand (13%). Around 1 in 3 businesses reported not facing any challenges (36%).

## 5 . Energy

### System Average Price of gas

In the week to 10 November 2024, the System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 2% when compared with the previous week from 3.452 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh) to 3.537p/kWh. When compared with the equivalent week of 2023, it was broadly unchanged.

Our accompanying [System Average Price of gas dataset](#) is available.

### System Price of electricity

The System Price of electricity increased by 10% in the week to 10 November 2024 compared with the previous week, from a seven-day average price of 8.573 pence per kilowatt hour to 9.424 pence per kilowatt hour (p/kWh). This was 10% higher than the equivalent week of 2023, which had a seven-day average price of 8.531 p/kWh.

Our accompanying [System Price of electricity dataset](#) is available.

## 6 . Transport

### Daily UK flights

In the week to 10 November 2024, the daily average number of UK flights decreased by 11% when compared with the previous week but was 3% higher than the equivalent week of 2023.

Our accompanying [Daily UK flights dataset](#) is available.

## Weekly shipping indicators

The weekly count of total ships visiting the selected UK ports decreased by 1% in the week to 10 November 2024 when compared with the previous week. During this period, the weekly count of cargo and tanker ship visits increased by 2%.

When compared with the same week of 2023, the total number of ship visits decreased by 3%, while visits from cargo and tanker ships remained broadly unchanged.

Our accompanying [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#) is available.

## 7 . Housing

The total number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPCs) in the week to 10 November 2024 was 5% higher than the previous week for new dwellings across England and Wales, and was 3% lower for existing dwellings. The largest week-on-week increase in EPCs for new dwellings were in Yorkshire and the Humber and the East Midlands, which rose by 41% and 29%, respectively. The largest decreases were in the West Midlands and the East of England, which fell by 20% and 16%, respectively.

For EPCs in existing dwellings, the largest week-on-week increases were in London and the East of England, which both rose by 9%. The largest decrease was in the West Midlands, which fell by 24%. When compared with the equivalent period of 2023, the number of EPCs for new dwellings was 13% lower, while the number of EPCs for existing dwellings was 3% higher.

A [Weekly EPCs for domestic properties dataset](#) produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, is available.

## 8 . Data

### [System Average Price \(SAP\) of gas](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2024

Daily data showing System Average Price (SAP) of gas, and rolling seven-day average, traded in Great Britain over the On-the-Day Commodity Market (OCM). These are official statistics in development. Source: National Gas Transmission.

### [System Price of electricity](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2024

Daily data showing the System Price of electricity, and rolling seven-day average, in Great Britain. These are official statistics in development. Source: Elexon.

### [Daily UK flights](#)

Dataset | Released 14 November 2024

Daily data showing UK flight numbers and rolling seven-day average, including flights to, from, and within the UK. These are official statistics in development. Source: EUROCONTROL.

This section lists a selection of the data available in this publication. Please note that because of our data sharing agreement with MRI onLocation, we are unable to provide a dataset for our footfall metric. For the full list of available datasets, please see our [accompanying dataset page](#).

## 9 . Glossary

## Real-time indicator

A real-time indicator provides insights into economic activity using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys or experimental estimates, which represent useful economic and social concepts.

## Seasonal Adjustment

Seasonal adjustment is the identification and removal of consistent and systematic variation in time series associated with the time of year. For more information on seasonal variation, and how we implement seasonal adjustment, see Section 2 of our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology article](#).

# 10 . Data sources and quality

## Official statistics in development

These statistics are labelled as "[official statistics in development](#)". Until September 2023, these were called "experimental statistics". Read more about the change in our [Guide to official statistics in development](#).

We are developing how we collect and produce the data to improve the quality of these statistics. Find out more in our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology article](#).

Once the developments are complete, we will review the statistics with the Statistics Head of Profession. We will decide if the statistics are of sufficient quality and value to be published as official statistics, or if further development is needed. Production may be stopped if they are not of sufficient quality or value. Users will be informed of the outcome and any changes.

We value your feedback on these statistics. If you would like to get in touch, please email [realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk](mailto:realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk).

## Dataset release dates and intended release frequency

Latest release dates and intended release frequency of our associated datasets are available in this section. Please note that there may be some change to the intended release frequency for a variety of reasons, such as data availability. If you would like further information about any of these datasets, or previous release dates, please email [realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk](mailto:realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk).

## Weekly data release

- [UK credit and debit card payments](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.
- [Revolut spending on debit cards dataset](#); last updated on 1 February 2024.
- [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.
- [Company incorporations, voluntary dissolutions and compulsory dissolutions dataset](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.
- [Advanced notification of potential redundancies dataset](#); last updated on 24 October 2024.
- [System Average Price of gas dataset](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.
- [System Price of electricity dataset](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.
- [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.
- [Daily UK flights dataset](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.

## Monthly data release

- [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.
- [Value Added Tax \(VAT\) flash estimates dataset](#); last updated on 17 October 2024.
- [Renter affordability for new tenancies dataset](#); last updated on 14 November 2024.

## Quarterly data release

- [Sales and jobs in small businesses dataset](#); last updated on 7 November 2024.

## Discontinued data series

- [Transactions at Pret A Manger dataset](#); last updated on 31 October 2024 with a fortnightly data release (these estimates are no longer being updated because of cessation of our data sharing agreement).
- [Online job advert estimates dataset](#); last updated on 24 October 2024 with a weekly data release (these estimates are no longer being updated because alternative data are being provided from December 2024).
- [UK spending on credit and debit cards dataset](#); last updated on 16 May 2024 with a weekly and monthly data release (these estimates have been replaced by our new UK credit and debit payments weekly series).

## Strengths and limitations

These statistics have been produced to provide timely indicators of the effect of developing world events on the UK economy and society, using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys, or official statistics in development.

The data presented in this bulletin are reviewed and refreshed on a regular basis. Indicators are swapped in and out of the publication based on their suitability and availability.

## Seasonality

Seasonal fluctuations are likely to be present in many of these indicators, so caution must be applied when interpreting changes in series that are not seasonally adjusted.

## 11 . Related links

### [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#)

Methodology | Last updated 2 April 2024

Methodology for the data collection, aggregation, analysis and presentation for the real-time indicators bulletin.

### [GDP monthly estimate, UK](#)

Bulletin | Released monthly

Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK. It estimates the size of and growth in the economy.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain](#)

Bulletin | Released fortnightly

Social insights on daily life and events, including important issues, cost of living and the NHS, from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

### [Business insights and impact on the UK economy](#)

Bulletin | Released fortnightly

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses, including financial performance, workforce, trade, and business resilience.

## 12 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), published 14 November 2024, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 14 November 2024](#)